most beautiful and attractive tourist destination like other islands in the world and should become a big asset for the Indian economy; and

(c) what Central assistance Government propose to give to Andaman and Nicobar Islands in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The development and promotion of tourism is primarily the responsibility of the respective State Governments/ UT Adminsitrations. However, the Ministry of Tourism extends financial assistance to them for tourism related projects which are identified in consultation and interaction with them. To facilitate the efforts of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Administration, Government of India had prepared in 2003 a 20-Year Perspective Plan for development of tourism in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

During the Tenth Five Year Plan, an amount of Rs.6.25 lakh was sanctioned by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India to Andaman and Nicobar Islands for tourism related activities. The Government of india has also allocated Rs. 76.5 crore as additional Central Assistance under Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme for up-gradation of tourism in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to be utilized in 3 consecutive years, i.e. 2006-07 to 2008-09.

Development of Chandipur Beach in Orissa

600. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Chandipur beach in Orissa is proposed to be developed as a tourist resort of international standards by the World Tourism Organisation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a team of the above organization has visited the place to examine its potential; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) A team from the World Tourism Organisation had visited Chandipur and had meetings with Collector Balasore, Local Officials, representative from NGOs and travel trade and collected relevant information material regarding tourism potential of the place. However, no specific project proposal has been received from United Nations World Tourism organisation or the State Government in this regard. As part of Central Financial Assistance, Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned an amount of Rs. 208.55 lakhs for the development of tourism relatd facilities at Chandipur under the project Integrated Development of Chandipur-Talasari-Udaypur-Chandaneswar-Remuna-Panchalingeswar-Nilagiri Circuit. In addition, an amount of Rs. 3.00 lakh was also sanctioned for the Golden Beach Festicval at Chandipur on Sea.

Incentive Scheme for Budget Hotels

601. DR. K. KESHAVA RAO: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether her Ministry has formulated a new incentive scheme for 'budget hotels' to boost tourism;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the scheme will become operational?